

## Peru

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### INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, Peru has faced significant political and social instability. Although only two presidents were expected to serve during this period, the country has seen six different individuals assume the presidency due to a combination of resignations, impeachments, and contested electoral outcomes. According to several recent public opinion polls, the current president, Dina Boluarte, and Congress hold record-low single-digit approval ratings because of the disillusionment with political leadership and a significant increase in homicide rates, largely driven by extortion linked to organized crime.

Peruvian journalism faces a complex and increasingly challenging landscape. Political polarization, coupled with the widespread dissemination of misinformation and fake news, has significantly undermined public trust in the media. At the same time, the ongoing media financial crisis threatens the sustainability of legacy news organizations, leading to staff reductions and increasing labor precarity. The journalistic profession, still recovering from the severe impact of the pandemic, now confronts a dual challenge: navigating an increasingly intricate national agenda while contending with emerging technological challenges.

According to Reporters Without Borders' Press Freedom Index, Peru has dropped 53 places from 2022 to 2025 (77 to 130). Despite these adverse conditions, a resilient and independent digital journalism sector has emerged – one that actively seeks innovative models of financing and distribution while prioritizing investigative reporting and data journalism as means to withstand external pressures and uphold the public's right to information. This report is grounded in fieldwork conducted between early 2023 and early 2024.

### BACKGROUNDS OF JOURNALISTS

The Peruvian journalism guild shows a significant gender imbalance: only 27.3% of the sample are women. The average age of Peruvian journalists is 44.0 years (SD = 11.5, Median = 42). Most have completed higher education, with 73.9% holding a bachelor's degree or its equivalent. A large majority (85.8%) have received formal or professional training in journalism. This training has primarily been obtained through universities or higher education institutes (76.3%), as well as short courses (86.3%) and professional internships (70.5%).

### JOURNALISTS IN THE NEWSROOM

The Peruvian media ecosystem is primarily commercial in nature. Accordingly, the majority of surveyed Peruvian journalists work for private/commercial outlets (74.9%), while 23% are employed by non-profit media organizations. About two-thirds (67.5%) of respondents work in local or regional media, whereas 34.3% are employed by national or transnational outlets. In terms of the background of their main employers, most of them work in radio (40.3%), followed by online media (22.4%), newspapers (11.9%), and television (9.0%). The predominance of radio journalists in local media reflects the national sample's capacity to highlight the contributions and activities of regional journalism in a highly centralized country.

On average, Peruvian journalists have 16.2 years of professional experience (SD = 8.5, Median = 15), and 61.9% are members of a professional organization. Most respondents work across multiple sections or thematic areas (74.8%), and 63.9% reported experiencing stress either occasionally or frequently.

A significant majority of surveyed journalists (83.9%) reported holding more than one job in addition to their work in journalism, while only slightly more than a third of Peruvian journalists (39.5%) have a full-time employment contract. Taken together, these figures reflect precarious labor conditions within the profession – conditions that are further underscored by the fact that part-time and freelance/self-employed journalists constitute over half of the workforce (51.8%). Within this context, journalists in full-time employment responded they work 38.3 hours a week on average (SD = 17.9, Median = 37.5).

SAFETY AND WORK-RELATED CONCERNS

Hate speech, public discreditation, and the hacking or blocking of social media accounts or websites were identified as the most common threats faced by Peruvian journalists (see Table 1). Although less frequent, other forms of threats and legal actions against journalists are also cause for concern. Nearly all respondents expressed apprehension regarding the impunity enjoyed by those who harass Peruvian journalists. A large majority reported fears related to their physical, mental, and emotional well-being, while slightly less than half expressed concern about their job security (see Table 2).

TABLE 1. EXPERIENCED THREATS

	N	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Demeaning or hateful speech directed at you	333	2.4%	6.3%	21.6%	26.1%	43.5%
Public discrediting of your work	335	0.9%	1.5%	14.6%	22.7%	60.3%
Surveillance	333	0.0%	2.7%	9.3%	21.9%	66.1%
Hacking or blocking of social media accounts or websites	335	1.2%	3.0%	17.6%	26.9%	51.3%
Arrests, detentions or imprisonment	331	0.0%	0.3%	1.5%	3.0%	95.2%
Legal actions against you because of your work	335	0.3%	1.8%	10.4%	22.4%	65.1%
Stalking	331	0.0%	2.1%	7.6%	17.5%	72.8%
Other threats or intimidations directed at you	332	0.6%	1.8%	10.8%	18.7%	68.1%
Sexual assault or sexual harassment	330	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%	4.5%	94.2%
Other physical attacks	331	0.0%	0.9%	2.1%	11.5%	85.5%
Coercion	331	0.3%	0.3%	1.5%	9.1%	88.8%
Questioning of your personal morality	333	0.0%	2.1%	6.9%	14.1%	76.9%
Others using your byline for fabricated or manipulated stories	334	0.0%	0.9%	5.7%	7.5%	85.9%
Others disseminating your personal information	333	0.0%	1.8%	3.9%	14.4%	79.9%
Workplace bullying	330	0.3%	0.6%	3.3%	8.8%	87.0%
Abductions	332	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	99.1%
Office raids or seizures or damage to equipment	332	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	2.7%	96.7%
Intimidation that targets family	331	0.0%	0.6%	1.5%	6.6%	91.2%

Question: "In the last five years, how often have you experienced any of the following actions related to your work as a journalist?"

TABLE 2. WORK-RELATED CONCERNS

	N	Agree/ strongly agree	Mean	SD
Worried about losing job in journalism within the next 12 months	335	46.3%	3.2	1.09
Concerned about physical well-being	330	75.2%	3.8	1.02
Concerned about emotional and mental wellbeing	329	83.3%	4.0	0.89
Concerned that those who harm journalists in Perú go unpunished	330	96.7%	4.5	0.68

Question: "Thinking about your work, please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements." (Scale: 5 = Strongly agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly disagree.)

JOURNALISTIC ROLES

Journalistic roles were highly valued by Peruvian journalists (see Table 3). There was broad support for roles tied to journalism's social mission – such as highlighting social issues, promoting peace and tolerance, and giving voice to marginalized groups. In contrast, roles associated with journalism's political agency – such as encouraging political participation or portraying political leadership in a specific or accurate way – received comparatively limited support.

TABLE 3. JOURNALISTIC ROLES

	N	Very/extremely important	Mean	SD
Be a detached observer	334	84.1%	4.03	0.61
Monitor and scrutinize those in power	334	79.6%	4.01	0.75
Shine a light on society's problems	333	91.3%	4.29	0.65
Motivate people to participate in politics	331	39.0%	2.92	1.21
Provide analysis of current affairs	332	87.0%	4.13	0.65
Let people express their views	333	84.4%	4.13	0.67
Provide information people need to form political opinion	332	70.5%	3.83	0.91
Advocate for social change	333	83.8%	4.14	0.70
Influence public opinion	331	59.5%	3.65	0.94
Set the political agenda	331	50.8%	3.36	1.08
Promote peace and tolerance	333	92.2%	4.32	0.63
Educate the audience	335	82.1%	4.10	0.83
Point toward possible solutions to society's problems	334	88.9%	4.22	0.66
Speak on behalf of the marginalized	335	93.4%	4.39	0.65
Support national development	333	85.6%	4.13	0.66
Support government policy	329	54.7%	3.51	0.96
Convey a positive image of political leaders	332	32.2%	2.89	1.09
Provide entertainment and relaxation	332	43.1%	3.17	1.08
Provide the kind of news that attracts the largest audience	331	72.2%	3.83	0.85
Provide advice, orientation and direction for daily life	332	64.2%	3.66	0.90
Tell stories that emotionally move the audience	330	69.4%	3.80	0.87
Support efforts to protect public health	330	87.0%	4.14	0.66
Counteract disinformation	326	88.3%	4.19	0.68
Discuss future implications of current events	331	84.0%	4.05	0.74

Question: "Please tell me how important it is to do each of the following in your daily work." (Scale: 5 = Extremely important; 4 = Very important; 3 = Moderately important; 2 = Slightly important; 1 = Not at all important.)

## JOURNALISTIC EPISTEMOLOGIES

Perceptions of journalistic epistemology among Peruvian journalists are highly diverse (see Table 4). Participants widely agreed on the importance of alerting audiences to false claims, being transparent about their viewpoints in their work, using interpretation to make sense of events, and the possibility of objectively representing reality.

**TABLE 4. JOURNALISTIC EPISTEMOLOGIES**

	N	Agree/ strongly agree	Mean	SD
Interpretation is necessary to make sense of facts	328	83.2%	3.95	0.89
Truth is inevitably shaped by those in power	329	10.6%	2.14	0.94
It is impossible for journalists to withhold their personal beliefs from reporting	329	30.4%	2.88	1.01
Things are either true or false, there is no in-between	332	75.9%	3.90	0.87
It is possible to represent objective reality in reporting	329	81.5%	3.98	0.80
Journalists should trust their instincts in deciding what's true and what's not	332	39.5%	3.07	1.08
Journalists should intuitively know what the final story will be	331	41.7%	3.09	1.02
Journalists should let the facts speak for themselves	330	77.0%	3.83	0.77
Journalists should be part of a community to portray it accurately	328	28.0%	2.72	1.06
Journalists should make their standpoint transparent in their work	329	86.3%	4.04	0.75
Journalists should alert audiences when a source's claim is untruthful	330	87.9%	4.14	0.77

Questions: "The following statements deal with beliefs related to how journalists know what they know. For each of them, please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree." / "Using the same scale, please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following beliefs." (Scale: 5 = Strongly agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly disagree.)

## JOURNALISTIC ETHICS

Journalists in Peru showed substantial agreement on the importance of professional standards over subjective or situational considerations in journalistic ethics (see Table 5). However, when it comes to controversial reporting methods, just over a third of respondents considered the use of hidden recording devices to be always justified. Similarly, the use of confidential or private documents without authorization was viewed as justified in certain circumstances (see Table 6).

**TABLE 5. ETHICAL ORIENTATIONS**

	N	Agree/ strongly agree	Mean	SD
What is ethical for journalists should always be determined by professional standards regardless of situation and personal judgment	334	71.3%	3.69	1.13
What is ethical for journalists should be determined by professional standards unless extraordinary circumstances require disregarding them	329	26.4%	2.70	1.04
What is ethical for journalists should depend on each specific situation	328	2.4%	2.17	0.68
What is ethical for journalists should be a matter of personal judgment	328	29.9%	2.63	1.11

Question: "The following statements describe different responses journalists may have to ethical problems. For each of them, please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree." (Scale: 5 = Strongly agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly disagree.)

**TABLE 6. JUSTIFICATION OF CONTROVERSIAL REPORTING METHODS**

	N	Always justified	Justified on occasion
Claiming to be somebody else	335	0.0%	10.4%
Using hidden recording devices	333	38.4%	7.8%
Using confidential business or government documents without authorization	335	1.2%	33.1%
Using the personal materials of powerful people, such as documents and photos, without their permission	332	1.2%	29.8%
Using the personal materials of ordinary people, such as documents and photos, without their permission	332	0.3%	22.3%
Paying people for confidential information	335	0.3%	16.7%
Accepting money from sources	328	0.0%	2.4%
Accepting a free product or service from sources	334	0.3%	5.4%
Producing content that mimics news stories but hides its promotional nature	332	0.6%	4.2%
Publishing or broadcasting stories with information that is not yet verified	329	0.0%	2.7%

Question: "Which of the following, if any, do you think may be always justified, or justified on occasion, and which would you not approve of under any circumstances?"

## EDITORIAL AUTONOMY AND MEDIA FREEDOM

Peruvian journalists hold a generally positive perception of freedom and autonomy in their professional work (see Table 7). A large majority report having considerable or complete freedom to select news topics and determine which aspects to emphasize in their reporting. Paradoxically, their assessment of media freedom of expression in the country is notably more critical, with a majority of 62.5% of journalists characterizing it as limited.

**TABLE 7. PERCEPTIONS OF EDITORIAL AUTONOMY AND MEDIA FREEDOM**

	N	A great deal/ complete freedom	Mean	SD
Freedom in selecting the news stories	334	78.1%	4.07	0.81
Freedom in deciding which aspects of a story should be emphasized	335	74.3%	4.00	0.81
Media freedom in Peru	331	37.5%	3.06	1.07

(Scale: 5 = Complete freedom; 4 = A great deal of freedom; 3 = Some freedom; 2 = Little freedom; 1 = No freedom at all.)

## EDITORIAL INFLUENCES

A majority of Peruvian journalists identified journalism ethics as a very or extremely influential editorial factor (63.3%), followed by feedback from the audience (47.8%) and audience research and data (47.1%). Personal values and beliefs (45.4%) as well as access to information (45.1%) and availability of news-gathering resources (4.3%) are considered also relevant editorial influences (see Table 8).

**TABLE 8. EDITORIAL INFLUENCES**

	N	Very/extremely influential	Mean	SD
Peers on the news staff	302	17.9%	2.36	1.08
Editorial supervisors and higher editors	299	27.1%	2.60	1.23
The business managers of the news organization	292	24.7%	2.45	1.28
The owners of the news organization	296	25.0%	2.44	1.32
Editorial policy	315	38.4%	3.01	1.23
Advertising considerations	306	28.1%	2.60	1.24
Profit expectations	305	32.1%	2.72	1.24
Audience research and data	310	47.1%	3.16	1.16
Availability of news-gathering resources	310	40.3%	3.07	1.19
Time limits	299	23.7%	2.55	1.16
Journalism ethics	313	63.3%	3.62	1.15
Self-censorship	301	18.6%	1.99	1.27
Personal values and beliefs	306	45.4%	3.08	1.28
Colleagues in other media	305	15.4%	2.10	1.12
Friends, acquaintances and family	309	6.8%	1.91	0.92
Feedback from the audience	318	47.8%	3.20	1.10
Competing news organizations	315	24.8%	2.63	1.23
Media laws and regulation	316	29.7%	2.70	1.27
Access to information	315	45.1%	3.21	1.16
Government censorship	302	19.2%	2.15	1.24
Government officials	299	17.4%	1.98	1.20
Politicians	298	15.8%	1.95	1.20
Business people	302	16.2%	1.99	1.23
Public relations	309	29.8%	2.65	1.31
Relationships with news sources	301	35.9%	2.79	1.32
Police	301	19.3%	2.15	1.22
Issue advocacy groups	306	15.4%	1.87	1.23
Scientists or health experts	310	33.5%	2.65	1.35
Religious groups and institutions	307	15.3%	1.93	1.23
Military	303	12.5%	1.71	1.17
Para-military groups, militias and similar groups	296	12.5%	1.56	1.15
Organized crime and criminal groups	300	11.7%	1.55	1.12
Terrorist groups	288	10.4%	1.46	1.08

Question: "Here is a list of potential sources of influence. Please tell me how much influence each of the following has on your work as a journalist." (Scale: 5 = Extremely influential; 4 = Very influential; 3 = Moderately influential; 2 = Slightly influential; 1 = Not at all influential.)